



Mural outside Carnitas Don Pedro, Chicago



Dominican University, River Forest

## The Anglo/Hispanic Divide at a Midwestern HSI: Translanguaging 1<sup>st</sup>-year Composition, Embracing the Contact Zone

Gema Ortega, PhD, English, Director CRWS  
Lisa Petrov, PhD, Spanish, Director Title V P031S170015

# Contact Zones

PRATT:

Contact Zones are “social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power” (34).



Collection of Julia and Thomas Lanigan, New Jersey

E. Chagoya, "Crossing I" (1994)

ANZALDUA:

“Cradled in one culture, sandwiched between two cultures, straddling all three cultures and their value system, la mestiza undergoes a struggle of flesh, a struggle of borders, an inner war ... having more than one culture, we get multiple, often opposing messages. The coming together of two self-consistent but habitually incompatible frames of reference causes un choque, a cultural collision” (100).

# The Anglo/Hispanic Divide in the Midwest:

## OUR STUDENTS



Yoong, Sabrina. "My Hybrid Identity"

- ✓ **MAYORIA:** US-born, yet transcultural, English-dominant with exposure to other languages and/or varieties of English.
- ✓ **MUCHOS:** Generation 1.5 (Pérez-Firmat) heritage speakers, born in the US with multiple levels of proficiency in English and heritage language(s).
- ✓ **BASTANTES:** Trans/bi-national students: US or foreign born with strong linguistic, family, and cultural ties to their (grand)parents' country or region.
- ✓ **POCOS:** Foreign students

## OUR UNIVERSITY CULTURE:

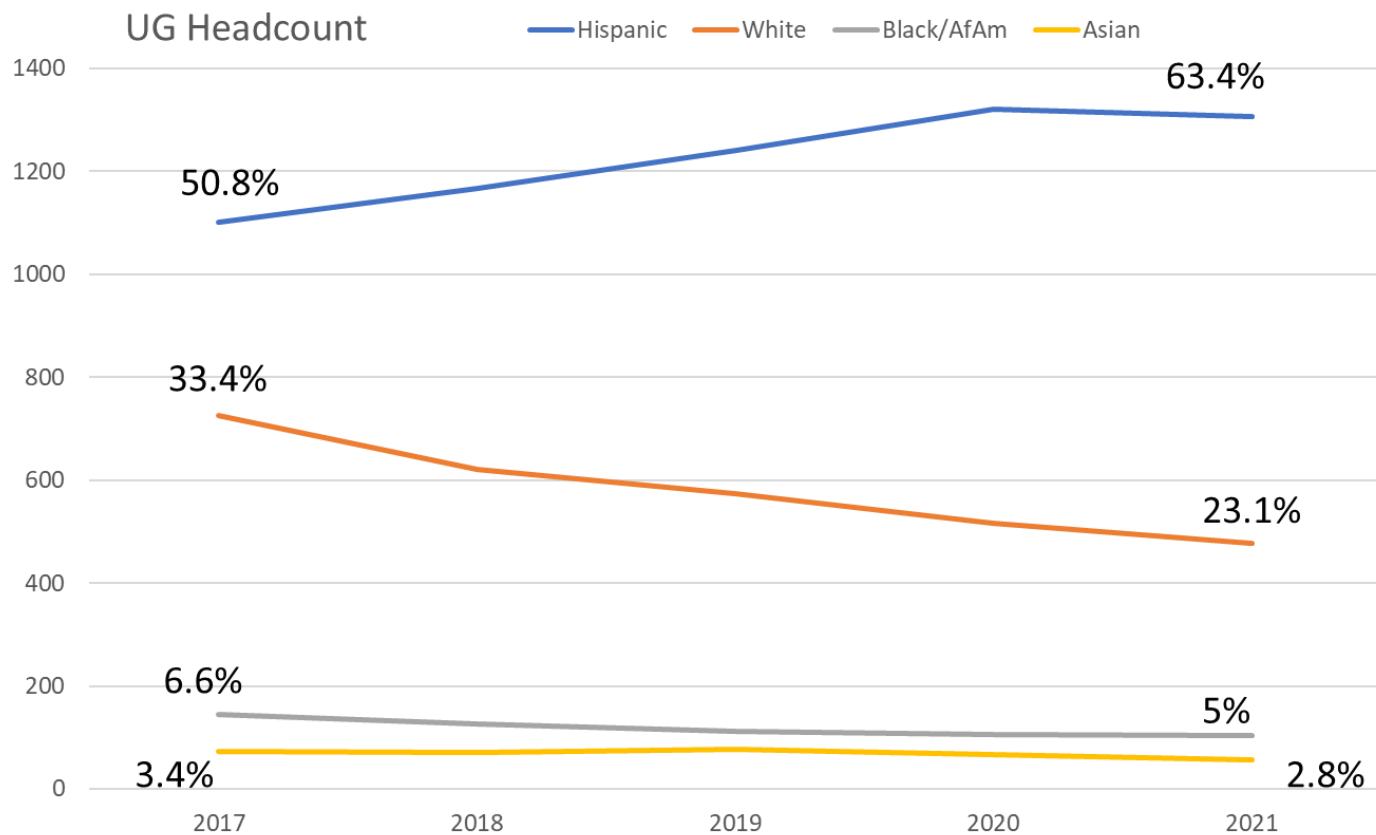
### **MOST:**

- ✓ Monolingual, monocultural, US educated and based,
- ✓ Anglo-American curriculum emphasis on liberal multiculturalism,
- ✓ Focus on “difference” as an add-on rather than a principle or at the center of knowledge.



Image collage by Bridget Moser, Whiteness (2020)

# Demographic Divides



## FACULTY PROFILE in 2020

### FT:

70% White  
10% Asian  
8% Hispanic  
7% Black

### PT:

67% White  
10% Black  
8% Hispanic  
3% Asian

Asset Based



**CONSEQUENCES  
of the Divide:  
Traditional  
Pedagogies and  
Anglo-American  
Curriculum**

1. Stigmatizes the “home” language(s) as “deficiencies” (Ruíz 15)
2. Privileges monolingual instruction because of teachers
3. Dismisses positive strengths
4. Creates internal cultural conflict
5. Decreases confidence and increases stigma
6. Encourages isolation and lack of engagement
7. Promotes invisibility of students and their backgrounds

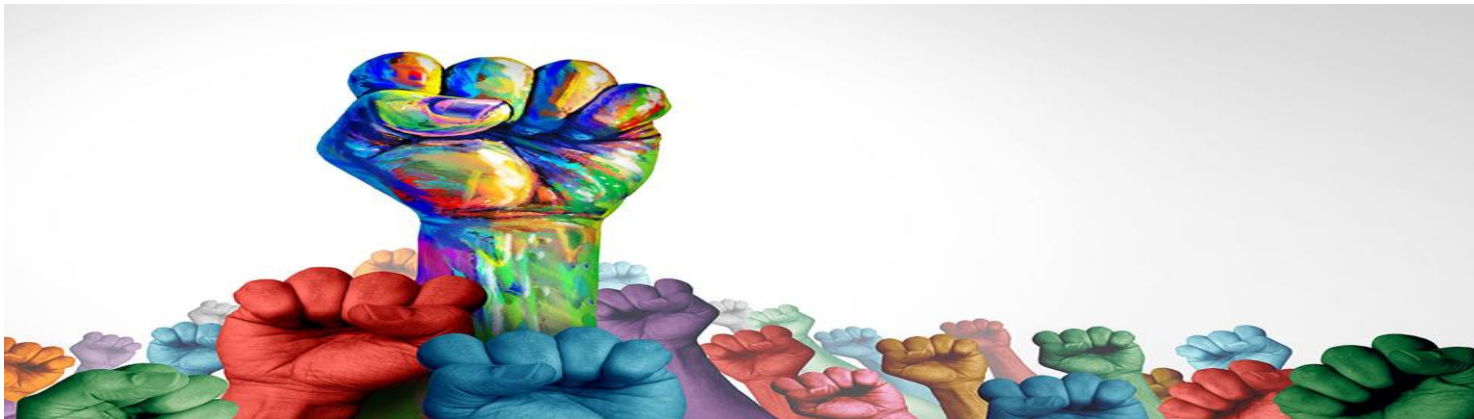
# Pedagogical Principles in the **Contact Zone**: Social Justice & Social Practice

## Attention to **Social/Educational Justice**:

- ✓ Reflect upon and provide equity for the students' cultures and linguistic communities.
- ✓ **Build on** linguistic and cultural strengths
- ✓ Have high expectations and **promote academic rigor**,
- ✓ Actively **advocate** for bicultural and multilingual identities.

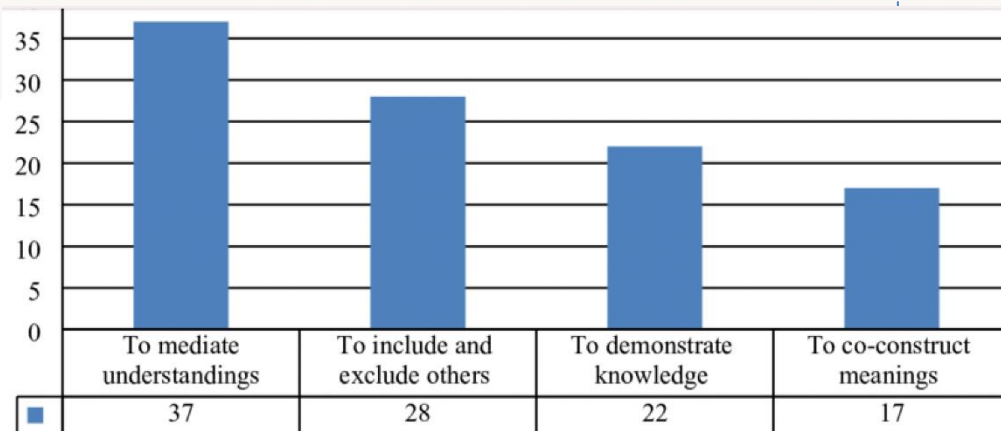
## Attention to **Social Practice**:

- ✓ Rely on interdisciplinary collaborations.
- ✓ Relate curricular content with relevant students' experiences and global issues (Cummins 58).
- ✓ Support **quality** interactions that focus on dialogue.
- ✓ Use **collaborative and cooperative learning**. (Gibbon 2002)



# Translanguaging: MECHANISM to negotiate power

- ✓ a strategic, university practice
- ✓ an individual approach
- ✓ a value system



The Translanguaging Stance

The Translanguaging Design

The Translanguaging Shifts

- Systematic, strategic way that assist multilingual speakers in making meaning, shaping experiences, and gaining deeper understanding and knowledge of the languages in use and the content being taught. ( Cenoz ' Gorter, 2011)

## Why Translanguaging?

- Provides a **critical post-structural lens**
  - affords an examination of students' fluid language practices in service of their purposes, identities, and meaning-making (Otheguy, García, & Reid, 2015)
- Emerges from a **social justice agenda**
  - stands in fierce opposition to top-down, modernist, or neoliberal forces and to challenge the monolingual orthodoxy which dominates the TESOL field (Flores & Aneja, 2017; Valdés, in press)

# Creating a Third Space: Critical Reading, Writing and Speaking Program (CRWS)

- ✓ CRWS is an academic space where cultural and political topics are ideally put into play so that the exchange of ideas leads to a further understanding of others' subjectivity.
- ✓ CRWS instructors center their instruction on what students say and write in an ongoing effort to learn how to read, understand, and respond to the “strange,” sometimes culturally threatening, multivocal texts students produce while writing in the contact zone. (Miller 145)



- ✓ CRWS compels students to describe themselves in ways that critically engage with representations others have made of their identities.



# CRWS at DU

**¿DE  
DÓNDE  
VENIMOS?**



FROM:

- ✓ English department
- ✓ genre writing
- ✓ assigned to students
- ✓ English-centric
- ✓ culturally “neutral”

TO:

- interdisciplinary teaching
- theme-based pedagogy
- student’s choice of theme
- multilingual/translanguaging
- a spectrum of culturally-aware pedagogies (Inclusive, Culturally Responsive, Critical Race Theory)

Choose readings that foreground students' identities.

Encourage research in multiple languages by authors from outside the US.

Make students the experts!

Let them research aspects of their cultural, linguistic heritages & identities.

Read about and discuss code-switching as resistance to linguistic colonialism

**SMALL ACTIONS**  
**+ LOTS OF PEOPLE**  
**= BIG CHANGE**

Allow students to read in the original language if they want to/can.

Decenter English & Anglo-American approaches as universal!  
Compare cultures, norms & perceptions.

Use other languages in the classroom, especially in groups and let your students "shuttle between languages" when writing.

(Canagarajah, 2006)

Encourage cultural and linguistic translation to illuminate either language.



Thanks a Todxs!  
lapetrov@dom.edu  
gortega@dom.edu

### References:

- Baca, Damian. "Contesting U.S. Cultures of Authorship" *Authorship in Composition Studies* Eds. Sheryl Fontain and Susan Hunter. Thompson, 2006: 117-133.
- Bizzell, Patricia. "Multiculturalism, Contact Zones, and the Organization of English Studies." *Professing in the Contact Zone : Bringing Theory and Practice Together*. Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 2002.48-58. Print
- Canagarajah, S. 'The place of world Englishes in composition: Pluralization continued' *College Composition and Communication*, 57(4), (2006): 586-619.
- Cummins, J. "Empowering Minority Students: A Framework for intervention" *Harvard Educational Review* 56 (1986): 18-36.
- García, Ofelia and Flores, Nelson. " Multilingual Pedagogies" *The Routledge Handbook of Multilingualism*. Eds. Marilyn Martin-Jones and Adrian Blackledge. London: Routledge, 2012.
- Gibbons, P. *Scaffolding Language, Scaffolding Learning: Teaching Second Languages in the Mainstream Classroom*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2002.
- Harris, Joseph. "Negotiating the Contact Zone." *Journal of Basic Writing*, 14.1 (1995): 27-42
- Heath, S.B. *Ways With Words: Language, Life and Work in Communities and Classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge U.P, 1983.
- Maxson, Jeffrey. "'Government of Da Peeps, for Da Peeps, and by Da Peeps': Revisiting the Contact Zone." *Journal of Basic Writing*, 24.1 (2005): 24-47.
- Martin-Jones, M. *Multilingual Literacies: Reading and Writing Different Worlds*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2000.
- Miller, Richard E. "Fault Lines in the Contact Zone." *Professing in the Contact Zone : Bringing Theory and Practice Together*. Urbana, Ill.: National Council of Teachers of English, 2002. 121-145. Print
- Philipson, R. "Epilogue: querying language in 'English-medium' higher education" *Language and Education* 24.1 (January 2010): 75-79.
- Pratt, Mary Louise. "Arts of the Contact Zone." *Profession*, (1991): 33-40.
- Roozen, K. & Herrera, A. "Indigenous interests: Reconciling literate identities across extracurricular and curricular contexts" In M. Cox, J. Jordan, C. Ortmeier-Hooper, & G. Schwartz (Eds.), *Reinventing Identities in Second Language Writing*. Urbana, IL: NCTE Press, 2010.
- Ruiz, R. *Orientations in Language Planning*. NABE 8.2 (1984): 15-34.